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LETTER FROM UNDER SECRETARY EUGENE ROSTOW
TO GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE STATE SECRETARY
DUCKWITZ, MARCH 30, 1968

Dear Mr. Duckwitz:

It was good seeing you in Washington. I agree with you that continuing contact on matters of mutual concern is indispensable, and I look forward to our close and cordial cooperation on many common problems.

In your letter you raise, in the context of the Non-proliferation Treaty, the question of a possible reaffirmation of the United States nuclear guarantee for Europe. You suggest language the President might include in a declaration on this subject at the time of signing that Treaty.

I note that you recognize that the potential security risk which might arise from the different provisions on duration obtaining in the cases of the Non-proliferation Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty is an unlikely one. We agree. We also have previously drawn attention in our bilateral consultations with the Federal Republic to the Non-proliferation Treaty withdrawal clause. Any fundamental change in the security guarantee provided by the North Atlantic Treaty could be interpreted as an extraordinary event which the Non-proliferation Treaty withdrawal clause is designed to cover.

Nevertheless, we recognize that some German concern remains. However, the specific solution recommended in your letter presents problems. First, we foresee possible harmful effects resulting from issuance of a declaration by the United States that in any way might be construed as having been prompted by concern over the possibility of an early end of NATO. This is an issue of the utmost

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sensitivity. Second, and equally important, we believe that security undertakings of the type you suggest would be difficult to achieve outside of a new treaty framework.

In recognition of your concerns, however, I should like to suggest for your consideration an alternate course. This is a strong reaffirmation of North Atlantic Treaty commitments at the time of signing the Non-proliferation Treaty. At the same time, we and other members of NATO could make it clear that adherence to the Non-proliferation Treaty under current world conditions is made possible by the confidence of members in the North Atlantic Treaty.

Such an approach could serve to allay the apprehensions you have cited. I should appreciate knowing whether it would meet your requirements.

Sincerely,

Eugene V. Rostow

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